Bitter Polygala.

PLATE LIV.

THIS plant is interesting from the curious manner in which a part of the fruit is produced, by a kind of imperfect flower growing close to, and in some instances under, the surface of the ground. It is not the only species of the Polygala which has this peculiarity. I have often observed little shoots at the root of P. paucifolia, one of the most beautiful of the genus, bearing apterous flowers and subterranean fruit, precisely like those represented in our plate. The P. polygama, of Walter and Pursh, if, indeed, it is a distinct species, has the same remarkable mode of growth. It is difficult to imagine what end is attained by nature in this singular arrangement, by which a part of the seeds are ripened in the sun, while the rest, like the fruit of Arachis hypogea, is